

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEGUCI 04742 010004Z

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 DHA-02 /016 W

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R 311815Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1603

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEGUCIGALPA 4742

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN, HO

SUBJECT: RETURN OF US PRIESTS TO OLANCHO

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 4461 AND PREVIOUS

1. BUSHOP NICHOLAS D'ANTONIO INFORMED CONSOFF OCT 29 THAT FOUR MORE US CITIZENS, TWO PRIESTS AND TWO NUNS, HAD RETURNED TO PASTORAL DUTIES IN OLANCHO.

2. THE WEEK BEFORE THESE SAME PEOPLE HAD MET WITH CONSOFF FOR ADVICE WHETHER THEY SHOULD RETURN. CONSOFF REPLIED THEY FREE TO DO SO BUT THAT SITUATION UNSETTLED AS BASIC ANTAGONISMS BETWEEN CAMPESINOS AND LANDOWNERS REMAIN. HE SUGGESTED BEST ADVICE TO FOLLOW SHOULD BT THAT OF THEIR CHURCH AUTHORITIES. ACCORDING TO GROUP THE ARCHBISHOP OF TEGUCIGALPA SUGGESTED THEY WAIT FURTHER BUT BISHOP D'ANTONIO, THEIR ACTUAL SUPERIOR, ADVISED THEM ONLY THEY MUST "FOLLOW THEIR CONSCIENCES".

3. GROUP APPEARED PRIMARILY CONCERNED LESS FOR THEIR PHYSICAL SAFETY THAN FOR POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO CHURCH'S POSITION SHOULD ANY NEW VIOLENCE BE BLAMED ON THEIR RETURN TO AREA.

4. D'ANTONIO HIMSELF CONTINUES TO WAIT IN TEGUCIGALPA. HOLY SEE, PAPAL NUNCIO, AND FELLOW BISHOPS ALL HAVE URGED HIM NOT RETURN YET AND HE NOW RESIGNED TO A LONG WAIT. SANCHEZ

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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